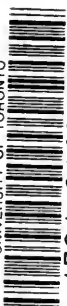


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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Robertson, Thomas William
The half caste

PR

5232

R5A66

1870



THE
HALF CASTE;

OR,

THE POISONED PEARL.

A Drama,

IN THREE ACTS.

(Adapted from the French.)

Thomas Willis ~~by~~

T. W. ROBERTSON,

III

AUTHOR OF

William E. Suter
Wrongly attributed
TWR by his Publisher

Caste; Ours; Society; M.P.; Dreams; School; Play; Home; David Garrick;
Jocrisse the Juggler; Chevalier de St. George; Ruy Blas; Sea of Ice;
Noemie; Ladies' Battle; Duke's Daughter; Not at all Jealous;
An Evening's Entertainment; Cantab; Two Gay Deceivers;
Star of the North; Birds of Prey; Peace at any Price;
&c., &c.

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5232
R5A66
~~THE HALF~~ CASTE.

A version of this Drama was produced at the Royal
Surrey Theatre, September 8th, 1856.

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Characters.

				Surrey Cast.
SEBASTIAN CABRERA (<i>a Creole, or Half</i>				
<i>Caste</i>)	Mr. CRESWICK.
LORD FALCONER OF FALCONWOOD (<i>an</i>				
<i>English Noble</i>)	...	...	...	Mr. SHEPHERD.
MONSIEUR DE GRANDET (<i>a ruined</i>				
<i>Planter</i>)	...	...	...	Mr. BASIL POTTER
OSCAR (<i>an Artist of unknown parentage</i>)				Mr. F. HUSTLEBY.
MONSIEUR DE BEUVAL (<i>a Magistrate</i>)				Mr. BUTLER.
HON. AUGUSTUS FITZNODDLETON	...			Mr. H. WIDDICOMBE
AUGUSTE DE VILLARCEAU	} <i>Parisians</i>	{		Mr. OLIVER.
EUGENE DE BELLOT				Mr. PHELPS.
DR. BERNARD (<i>a Mulatto</i>)	...	...		Mr. A. TAPPING.
JEROME (<i>a Domestic</i>)	...	...		Mr. RAYMOND.
EUGENIE	} <i>Daughters of</i>	{		Miss MARRIOT.
ISABEL DE GRANDET				Miss KATE PERCY.
FIFINE FADETTE (<i>a Florist</i>)	...			Miss F. BLAND.
MRS. MATCHEMALL	} <i>Ladies on</i>	{		Mrs. M. BROOKS.
MISS MARY JANE				Miss J. LASCELLES.
MATCHEMALL				

Date of Action and Costume before the abolition
of slavery—or about 1830.

THE HALF CASTE.

Programme of Scenery, &c.

ACT I.—SWITZERLAND.

INTERIOR OF A CHALET.

*The Bernèse Alps, the Glaciers of the Oberland, the
Jungfrau, and the Grimsel (DALBY).*

ACT II.—PARIS.

APARTMENT BEHIND THE FLOWER SHOP OF FIFINE.

(GATES)

ACT III.

SALOON IN THE MANSION AT NEUILLY.

APARTMENT IN THE SAME.

WINTER GARDEN, CONSERVATORY,

AND

BALL ROOM.

(DALBY)

[This Drama is the Property of T. H. LACY.]

THE HALF CASTE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*The Exterior Gallery of a Swiss Châlet. Sign, L. U. E., "A l'Arc de Guillaume Tell," a bow and arrow painted on it; railings along the back, R. 4 E. to L. 4 E.; doors R. and L., those on the right numbered 7, 8, 9, and 10; at the back picturesque Alpine scenery, all giving the idea of immense height; chairs and tables scattered about.*

FIFINE *discovered looking at the glass—she is in Swiss costume.*

FIFINE. Ah! the last time I wore this dress was an eventful day for me!—February the eighth. Oh dear! I suppose I shall never see him again! Never mind;—one can't afford to neglect one's personal appearance on that account—and such a personal appearance! (*admiring herself*) for, vanity apart I've seen worse.

Enter EUGENIE, *door L.*

Ah, Eugenie! how d'ye like my dress?

EUGENIE. Oh, charming! What a lovely day! How delightful to leave Paris for the snowy splendours of Grindelwald. Look!—we can see the Bernese Alps—the glaciers of the Oberland—the Jungfrau and the Grimsel.

FIFINE. Did you hear from Oscar yesterday?

EUGENIE. No; but the post is hourly expected. (*looking out*)

FIFINE. Ah! you're fine and impatient, I know. It must be very charming to have a regular lover, who corresponds diurnally and intends matrimonially.

EUGENIE. And have you none such?—honour now, Fifine.

FIFINE. No, my dear, I haven't—worse my luck!

EUGENIE. No lover?—come now!

FIFINE. Not a downright, thorough-bred one. To be sure there was one man; but he—Oh! never mind about him!—I'll tell you some other time.

Enter MRS. MATCHEMALL *and* MISS MARY JANE MATCHEMALL,
door L.

MRS. M. At what time will the guide be here for the excursion to Grindewald?

FIFINE. At one o'clock, madame.

MARY J. Are they very dangerous?

FIFINE. The excursions?

MARY J. No, the glaciers.

FIFINE. Yes, mademoiselle, rather.

MARY J. (*romantically*) That's right. I adore peril.

MRS. M. Any arrivals this last two hours?

FIFINE. None, madame.

MARY J. Isn't it nice and high here! Didn't you tell me that three weeks ago a number of travellers fell into one of the crevasses?

FIFINE. Yes, mademoiselle—one.

MARY J. (*disappointed*) Only one!

FIFINE. Only one. (*aside*) Did she expect a hundred?

EUGENIE. (*to* FIFINE) The society of these ladies is too exciting for me. I shall leave you for a time. *Exit, R.*

MARY J. Only one, mamma. Was he killed?

FIFINE. Yes, mademoiselle.

MARY J. (*pleased again*) He was killed, mamma. How romantic!

MRS. M. If there are any arrivals you will inform us. Come, my child.

MARY J. Yes, mamma.

They exeunt, R.

FIFINE. I should think that would be a very nice girl—in a pie.

Enter SEBASTIAN CABRERA *and* LORD FALCONER, *door L.*

LORD F. (*this part to be played with great spirit, and humorous dare-devilry*) Here we are at last! and a tolerably steep ascent it has been.

FIFINE. (*starting*) That voice! Oh, surely——

LORD F. (*seeing her—aside*) Ah! My little milkmaid at the masquerade? How odd!

FIFINE. Does monsieur intend staying here?

LORD F. Monsieur does, most certainly. (*aside*) It is she! (*to* SEBASTIAN) And you too, I suppose.

SEBAS. Oh, certainly!

FIFINE. Will you be pleased to enter your names in the traveller's book? (*showing it*)

LORD F. To be sure I will. Let's have a look at your fluctuating population. Madrid and Saragossa—these traveller's books have become a sort of supplementary Cockney census. (*reading*) Monsieur de Beauval!

SEBAS. (*aside*) De Beauval! I was rightly informed then.

LORD F. (*reading*) "Captain de Boots," "Sir John Snobson," "Washington Dodge," "Lord and Lady Lumpleigh," "Mrs."—Potsdam and St. Petersburg! (*shouting*)

SEBAS. What's the matter?

LORD F. Oh, never mind me! It's only my method of swearing—an invention of my own. The Tourist's Ready Oath-maker. Milan and Mesopotamia! I must be off! I must go! Good-bye!

FIFINE. (*aside*) Going so soon!

LORD F. (*stopping and looking at FIFINE*) She has grown a deal prettier than she was. Thinner and more *distingué*, and I should not like to leave my singular, taciturn, but very interesting companion. (*reading dolefully*) Mrs. Matchemall, Miss Mary Jane Matchemall. Can't I escape? (*suddenly changing his tone*) A ray of hope! (*to FIFINE*) Have those disagreeable—I mean have those amiable ladies gone?

FIFINE. No, milord, they were here just now!

LORD F. (*overwhelmed with grief*) I'm a doomed victim! (*with a sudden change of manner*) No, I'm not! A bottle of Madiera, charming hostess.

FIFINE. (*aside to him*) Don't you remember me?

LORD F. N—o, I don't.

FIFINE. (*as she goes off*) But I remember him, for all that!

Exit, L.

SEBAS. A magnificent view. (*looking over gallery at back*)

LORD F. Delightful! Take a cigar. (*they smoke*). We've been rambling about together now for the last few days, and I don't even know your name.

SERVANT brings on bottle and glasses, L.

SEBAS. Henry Malcome.

LORD F. (*writing in book*) "Henry Malcome. Lord Falconer of Falconwood. Sit down, my dear Mr. Malcome. I've a favour to ask of you. (*they sit*) Don't interrupt me, there's a good fellow, before I ask it. I'm about to make a confidant of you. I've taken a prodigious fancy to you. Don't interrupt. (*SEBASTIAN never tries to interrupt*) I don't like England—I never did. When my father, Lord Falconer of Falconwood, departed this life, he left me a very fine property, consisting of debts. Being very much out at elbows, I had to live on the Continent, which I have done for years. One day—I was in Madrid at the time—I received a letter which had been following me about from place to place for nearly two years, informing me that an uncle of mine, whom I had never seen or heard of, had died in Bombay, and having no children of his own, had—good luck

to him!—most handsomely left me an immense fortune. Let's drink his health; and pray don't interrupt me. At the time I received this best of news, I had nothing in the world but a pocket-book full of—nothing, except family papers, passports, and letters of introduction. I departed for Bombay, and there found ample means of replenishing my very attenuated pocket-book, but, alas!—now don't interrupt me—there was a clause in the will—like a snake coiled up in a rosebud—to the effect that I was to marry a Miss Mary Jane Matchemall, a sort of ninety-ninth cousin of mine. She and her brother are the only relatives I have in the world—thank heaven! Now, sir, I abhor marriage in general, and Miss Mary Jane Matchemall in particular; in fact, I consider that matrimony is one of those institutions that should be used with the greatest moderation. Now, don't interrupt me! Luckily the words of the will ran thus: "On condition that the aforesaid Albert Frederick Augustus Falconer shall marry the aforesaid Mary Jane Matchemall when he returns to England." Do you see? "When he returns to England." I saw the loophole chance had so generously left me to escape, and said to myself, "Then damme if ever I do return to England!" And I never will! Marry Miss Mary Jane! Boulogne and Botany Bay sooner! I'd—sooner—sooner——

SEBAS. Sooner what?

LORD F. I'll tell you, if you'll only let me get in a word edgeways. (*taking out his pocket-book, and producing a ring*) Sooner this! I bought this little pearl, of a Fakir in India—they are devilish clever poisoners there—and if I put this into a glass of hock or port—are you fond of port? quite right; so am I—and drank it, the obituary of the *Morning Post* would announce the death of Lord Falconer of Falconwood, who expired, regretted by numerous friends, at such-and-such a place, of an attack of apoplexy. But don't let us talk of death; let us talk of something infinitely worse—marriage; and, still worse than that—as every horror has a deeper horror—of Miss Mary Jane—Mary Jane! Augh! Why, the name's enough to suffocate a fellow! You—you, my dear fellow, can save me!

SEBAS. I can!—how?

LORD F. If you would only let me speak, I'd tell you. By taking my name for to-day, and letting me take yours. When we've seen the Grindewald, we'll leave this place for ever.

SEBAS. Really, I could not——

LORD F. Now, you will interrupt me. Do, there's a good fellow, consider the awful fate that awaits me. I lent you my carriage two days ago, and you said you found it very comfortable; let me lend you my name for one day, and I dare

say you'll find that very comfortable too. Come now!—there, I see you will. (*shaking hands*) Thank you. Don't interrupt me by saying you will.

SEBAS. Since you insist——

LORD F. Of course I insist. But to be enabled to carry out the idea, we must change pocket-books. (*giving his*) Now don't refuse. What is there to fear?

SEBAS. Fear! (*taking it, and giving his own to LORD FALCONER*)

LORD F. Many thanks, Lord Falconer!

SEBAS. The obligation is mine, Mr. Henry Malcome.

Re-enter FIFINE, L.

FIFINE. (*to LORD FALCONER*) Your room is number eight, monsieur; yours number nine. (*aside*) I'll swear it's him! (*as they are going off at door, R.*)

LORD F. After you, Lord Falconer—the peerage first.

SEBAS. (*smiling*) I am obliged to you, Mr. Henry Malcome.

FIFINE. The other one has got the name—but *he* has the voice.

Enter LORD AUGUSTUS FITZNODDLETON, L.

FITZ. (*singing*) La, la, la, la! &c. Oh! come here, my pretty Swiss! La-ra-low-low! ou-low-low! oh!

FIFINE. Another guest! Will monsieur enter his name in the book?

FITZ. Let's see who's here. La, la! low-ow-ow-ow! Lord Falconer!—huzza! I shall see him at last, then. Mrs. Matchemall—Miss Mary Jane Matchemall!—brava! I feel highly jolly! (*writing*) "Lord Augustus Fitznoddleton. (*sings*) "Come, arouse thee, arouse thee, my merry Swiss boy!" Stop—I forgot—I'm very hungry. I'll have a smoke. Sweet lady of the châlet, sing me a song—some Swiss song, all about lul-da-re-e-re-e-re-e-te! lul-da-re-e-re-e-re-e-te!

FIFINE. I can't sing.

FITZ. Not sing? A Swiss peasant who can't sing? Lul-da-dow-ow-dow-ow-de-e-dee! What a horrible humbug! Light me a cigar.

FIFINE. Oh, monsieur!

FITZ. What, won't you?—you must—you shall! Hang the place! I always make pretty girls light my cigars. Won't you? Sink the spot! No—dow-how, dow-how, dow-how! (*striking his stick on the table and chairs*) It's a regular swindle! a do!

FIFINE. Monsieur—Monsieur——

FITZ. Don't talk to me. Confound the place!

Enter SEBASTIAN, R., and seeing that FITZNODDLETON is the cause of the noise, seizes him by the shoulders.

FITZ. What do you mean? How dare you?

(SEBASTIAN takes FITZNODDLETON up in his arms, and places him outside the railings of the gallery at back)

SEBAS. Remain there, sir, till you learn better manners.

Enter LORD FALCONER, R.

LORD F. What's the matter?

Enter MRS. MATCHEMALL and MARY JANE, L.

FITZ. Help, help!

MARY J. Augustus! Is it you?

FITZ. I shall slip down! Help, help! *(SEBASTIAN lifts him back again)*

SEBAS. Now, sir, for the future learn to treat every woman with civility.

FITZ. *(furiously)* Your name, sir? *(LORD FALCONER nudges SEBASTIAN)*

SEBAS. Lord Falconer of Falconwood.

MARY J. Ah! 'tis he. *(throws herself into his arms)*

MRS. M. At last—at last! *(throws herself into his arms—SEBASTIAN astonished)*

FITZ. My lord, I am Lord Augustus Fitznoddleton—distantly related to you. I forgive your indiscretion, and request your friendship. *(LORD FALCONER laughs aside)*

Enter DE BEAUVAL and VISITORS, R.

DE BEAU. Is the guide ready for the excursion?

VISITOR. I believe not yet.

LORD F. Oh! never mind. Let's go without a guide.

DE BEAU. That would be imprudent, sir. Too many have lost their lives.

FITZ. *(alarmed)* Indeed! How?

DE BEAU. They have missed their footing, and been dashed to pieces on the glacier!

FITZ. Oh, how horrible!

LORD F. Horrible? Not at all. One must die some day, and better from a fall from a precipice than a fit of apoplexy or indigestion. To leap into eternity from such a height is a noble death, and one that I should prefer to any other.

FITZ. I should not! I should be afraid! What say you, my lord?

SEBAS. I have never known the emotion of fear.

MARY J. } *(caressing him)* Oh!

MRS. M. }

FITZ. Never?

SEBAS. Because I believe I have never been in danger. In my infancy an old sorceress predicted that I should die at the moment of my greatest triumph. I always succeed in everything that I undertake.

FITZ. How odd! That reminds me of something that happened to me once. One fine evening last November I was walking down Oxford Street towards Regent Circus——

Enter POSTMAN, L.

POSTMAN. A letter for Monsieur de Beauval and Mademoiselle Vincent. (*giving letters*) *Exit, L.*

Enter EUGENIE, R.

EUGENIE. For me!

SEBAS. (*observing EUGENIE*) How lovely! How noble!

EUGENIE. 'Tis from Oscar. I won't read it here. (*to FIFINE*) I'll wait till we are alone. (*she puts the letter into the corner of her handkerchief*)

LORD F. My lord. I always bet on every event. You say that you always succeed in everything you undertake. Now, I'll bet you fifty pounds, that I'm before you at the bottom of that ravine, and that I'm the first finder of—of—anything that any of these ladies choose to throw down there.

DE BEAU. Sir, such an act of rash folly——

MARY J. (*taking EUGENIE'S handkerchief from her quietly*) Oh, do! it will be so romantic! (*she throws the handkerchief over the gallery—general movement*)

EUGENIE. My letter! His dear letter that I had not even read. Oh, Oscar! Oscar!

FIFINE. My poor Eugenie.

SEBAS. 'Twas her handkerchief. She weeps. (*aloud*) I take your bet, sir! (*VISITORS applaud*) "Bravo!" (*to EUGENIE*) Do not weep, mademoiselle. (*to LORD FALCONER*) Permit me, sir, to make the descent alone.

LORD F. Alone! Spitzbergen and Salamanca! Do you think I would retract. (*putting on his gloves*) One moment! I have a great dislike to soiling my hands.

FITZ. As I was saying. It was one fine evening last November, I was walking down Oxford Street——

LORD F. Towards Regent Circus. Yes. You told us that before. Ladies and gentlemen, *au revoir*!

SEBASTIAN and LORD FALCONER *get over the railings, L. C., and descend—music—all on the stage look over into the ravine.*

EUGENIE. (*speaking through music*) They will be killed!

MARY J. How delightfully romantic!

FIFINE. (*screaming*) Ah! he slips!

FITZ. No—he don't. He is up again. (*Music, piano*) I feel that I am beginning to adore that Falconer.

EUGENIE. Thank heaven!

MRS. M. Here he is! (*Music, forte*)

ALL. Bravo! bravo! (*SEBASTIAN reappears with handkerchief*)

SEBAS. (*giving it to EUGENIE*) Mademoiselle.

EUGENIE. Oh, how can I thank you?

SEBAS. By permitting me to have the honour of your friendship.

FITZ. Bravo! bravo! It reminds me exactly of what I was speaking of. One fine evening last November, I was walking down Oxford Street—

LORD F. (*getting over railings*) Towards Regent Circus. Yes—we know.

DE BEAU. I congratulate you; but it was a most imprudent wager.

LORD F. So it was. But for his lordship I should have slipped into the torrent. He saved my life by perilling his own. Suppose we now go and choose our guide poles. I owe your lordship my life and fifty pounds. The guide will be here directly. (*all going off, L.*)

FITZ. Will he?—huzza! Then we shall scale Grindewald. (*singing*) Dul-da-dow-ow, dow-ow, dow-ow!

LORD F. Don't do that.

FITZ. Why not?

LORD F. I've a story to tell you.

FITZ. What is it?

LORD F. One fine evening last November I was walking down Oxford Street towards Regent Circus—

All laugh and exeunt variously.

SEBAS. (*stopping DE BEAUVAL as he is going off*) Your pardon, Monsieur De Beauval, for my curiosity; but did I not recognise, in the letter you received from the postman, the hand of Monsieur de Grandet, a rich planter in the Antillés?

DE BEAU. You did, my lord.

SEBAS. I hope that he is as rich and as prosperous as ever.

DE BEAU. Yes, my old friend is as he ever was, a millionaire.

SEBAS. (*aside*) As yet, then, he knows nothing—the mail has not arrived from Guadaloupe. (*aloud*) May I ask, Monsieur De Beauval, if you have brought with you an old servant—a man of colour—a quadroon—whose complexion is almost the same as yours or mine?

DE BEAU. Your lordship appears to be well informed.

SEBAS. I have a message for your good old servant. Is he with you here?

DE BEAU. No, my lord; he is dead.

SEBAS. (*with strong emotion*) Dead! (*recovering himself*) Poor old man! I thank you, Monsieur de Beauval. A pleasant journey.

DE BEAU. The same to you, my lord.

Exit DE BEAUVAL, L.

SEBAS. (*falling into a chair*) Dead!—my father dead—dead—dead!—my brother too, perhaps! Oh! shall I not find him—to embrace him—to strain him to my heart! I must—I will! But how? How can I find my brother under this assumed name—with these false papers! (*taking out the pocket-book* LORD FALCONER *exchanged with him—music, piano*) If this Lord Falconer were dead, with his name, his wealth, his influence, his papers, I could seek my brother, with a fair prospect of my search being successful. Instead of which, to-night I must return this to him, and to-morrow I may be known for the escaped slave, Sebastian Cabrera. (*a pause*) No! This Falconer is unknown. It shall—it must be so! (*music, forte—he writes on a slip of paper—reading*) “I seek death upon the ice field. Heaven have mercy on me!—Henry Malcome.” My brother, I yet shall find thee.

*Exit SEBASTIAN into Lord Falconer's chamber, No. 8—music, forte—he re-appears—*LORD FALCONER, EUGENIE, MRS. MATCHEMALL, MARY JANE, FITZNODDLETON, GUESTS, and GUIDE *enter—they all have guide poles—*SEBASTIAN *takes great notice of EUGENIE, who is embarrassed by his attentions.*

LORD F. Now for Grindewald!

SEBAS. (*aside*) Perhaps never to return.

Music—all exeunt but EUGENIE and FIFINE.

FIFINE. Now for Oscar's letter.

EUGENIE. But tell me about this Mr. Malcome.

FIFINE. My dear, I can't make it out. I could swear that it was the same.

EUGENIE. And that strange man—that English lord—

FIFINE. Isn't he remarkable?

EUGENIE. Do you know, Fifine, that as I look on him, I quite fear him.

FIFINE. La!

EUGENIE. He seems to me a man capable of committing a dreadful crime— (*a strong chord—a loud cry heard without*) Great heaven!

FIFINE. What is the matter?

Enter all the Characters but SEBASTIAN and LORD FALCONER, R.

FITZ. Monsieur Malcome——

FIFINE. Well?

MARY J. Lost!

GUIDE. He and the English lord would walk on before us, in spite of my entreaties and advice.

Enter SEBASTIAN—his face very pale, L.

SEBAS. I descended as far as I could. I called—I looked around—but in vain!

GUIDE. Who are his friends or relatives?

SEBAS. He has none.

EUGENIE. Look in his chamber. Perhaps there may be letters. (FIFINE goes, and returns with paper and pocket-book)

FIFINE. (reading) "I seek death upon the ice-field. Heaven 'have mercy on me!—Henry Malcome."

EUGENIE. (aside) How pale he looks! (regarding SEBASTIAN)

GUIDE. (opening pocket-book) A passport, bank-notes, and a silver medal.

SEBAS. (aside) That medal! Fatal oversight—I must regain it.

GUIDE. I must deliver them to the proper authorities. Will your lordship be pleased to accompany me? (music—piano)

SEBAS. I am ready. (aside) Courage, Lord Falconer of Falconwood! *Exit with GUIDE, L.—the others form a picture.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE.—Room in the house of Fifine, in the Passage de l'Opera, at Paris—door, with a window, L.—door, C., leading into the passage—door, R.—fireplace, with fire burning, R.—chairs and table, with work discovered on it.

FIFINE and EUGENIE discovered at work.

EUGENIE. What makes you so sad and silent, Fifine?

FIFINE. I was think of that ball at the Opera, when I first met and danced with—oh, dear me! he is dead at Grindewald.

EUGENIE. And I suppose because there is a ball at the Opera to-night you are reminded of him.

FIFINE. Yes; but it is very selfish of me to think of my troubles when you have so many deeper griefs to sadden you. Only to think of your never having heard of your father for so many months, after having found him so unexpectedly.

EUGENIE. 'Tis indeed strange. My stepmother drove me from the door. I was thrust out from my home by my father's lackeys.

FIFINE. And to think of his being so rich, too; and never to have written—never to have sent to you!

EUGENIE. 'Tis indeed unkind! And my half-sister, too—poor little Isabel! But they could not have written, for they cannot know my address.

FIFINE. Never mind, dear! Let us hope you'll soon have a family of your own; for to-morrow, you know——

Enter OSCAR, C.

OSCAR. To-morrow, you know, I take you to church.

EUGENIE. Oscar!

FIFINE. Now I'll go for a minute. I know you don't want me.

EUGENIE. Fifine!

FIFINE. Oh! I know—bless you. When two young people are going to be married, they are not fit for anybody's company but their own.

Exit FIFINE, C.

OSCAR. (*embracing her*) My darling Eugenie!

EUGENIE. Now, you mustn't come here interrupting me. I have all these flowers to paint by eight o'clock. You know there is a ball at the Opera to-night.

OSCAR. But I haven't seen you all day.

EUGENIE. Never mind. We shall be married soon.

OSCAR. Oh! what a delightful thought. Then I shall be with you all day, and all—Oh! my dear Eugenie. (*embracing her*)

EUGENIE. How gets on the picture?

OSCAR. Oh—finished. It is a capital likeness of me. That was your idea—a picture of "Despair," and my own face for the model. I hope soon to paint a companion picture—"Hope," and your face shall be the model. I am afraid I shan't paint that picture quickly. I shall have my eyes too near my sitter. (*kissing her*)

FIFINE. (*re-entering, C.*) Now, haven't you done yet? You mustn't be long. It's masquerade night, and we're very busy.

OSCAR. But, Fifine——

FIFINE. I'll give you two minutes longer. You must do all your love in that time.

Exit FIFINE, C.

OSCAR. (*embracing her*) Eugenie!

EUGENIE. Oscar!

OSCAR. Must I go?

EUGENIE. I'm afraid you must.

OSCAR. Adieu! till to-morrow. Adieu, Eugenie! Adieu, wife!

Exit OSCAR, C.—EUGENIE looks off after him.

FIFINE *runs on*, C.

FIFINE. Oh! Eugenie, here's a poor old man and a little child almost starved to death with cold. Run up stairs, light the stove, and make my bed ready for them, while I bring them in here. *Music*—EUGENIE *goes off*, L.—FIFINE *exits*, C.

Re-enter FIFINE with M. DE GRANDET and ISABEL—both dressed very miserably and perishing with cold—FIFINE leads them to the fire—they cover over it.

DE GRAND. Ah! fire! fire! fire! That's comfortable.

FIFINE. (*giving him wine—to ISABEL*) Have some, my dear.

ISABEL. No thank you, madame. Papa will perhaps take some more.

FIFINE. Your papa, is he? (*aside*) These people have been better off, I'm sure.

ISABEL. Oh, madame! I see you are an artificial flower-maker. We have been searching for days for the residence of a person in your trade—one Ffine Fadette.

FIFINE. Why, that's me!

ISABEL. Is this your house? Then we shall hear some news of Eugenie.

DE GRAND. (*rousing from his torpor*) Eugenie!

Enter EUGENIE, L.

EUGENIE. Here—(*seeing DE GRANDET*) My father!

ISABEL. Sister!

EUGENIE. Isabel!

DE GRAND. My child! (*EUGENIE rushes to DE GRANDET—picture*)

FIFINE. La! Father, daughter, sister. Why here's a whole family come together again!

EUGENIE. My dear father! Isabel! But tell me what has happened? Why this strange dress. Why have you left your estate. Explain! (*DE GRANDET falls into a sort of stupor*)

ISABEL. Poor papa! He is often like this since his misfortune. His reason often wanders.

EUGENIE. What misfortune?

ISABEL. He has been ruined by a wretch! A villain! The quadroon of whom I told you.

EUGENIE. What! The steward and overseer of his plantation?

ISABEL. Yes, Sebastian Cabrera!

DE GRAND. (*recovering at the sound*) Sebastian Cabrera! Oh! if I meet him once again! Once again, face to face! (*violently*)

ISABEL. (*calming him*) My dear papa!

DE GRAND. It is my Eugenie. It is her voice. The voice that came to me at night when I lay in prison.

EUGENIE. In prison!

DE GRAND. Yes. Oh! I forgot—you do not know. When I knew of my ruin, I sold all I possessed, and took a little lodging for Isabel and her poor mother, and went to Havre. My creditors supposed that I was in league with the villain who had robbed me, and threw me into prison. My wife fell ill. When I was released I flew to her bedside, and she who had owned eight hundred slaves, and lived a life of luxury, died in my arms, on a mattress of straw.

ISABEL. Since then we have wandered about, searching for Ffine Fadette, whom I had often heard you speak of. We have not touched food to-day; and my poor father—
(*fainting*)

DE GRAND. Isabel!

FIFINE. There—take them into my room, and I'll come to you directly.

DE GRAND. Thanks—thanks! My poor child! Oh, to find you again, after all my sufferings! Heaven be praised!

Music.—EUGENIE *leads off* DE GRAND and ISABEL,
door, L.

FIFINE. Now, that great English milord, Lord Falconer of Falconwood, gives away a great deal of money. I dare say if he knew of these poor people, he'd make 'em a handsome present.

DE VILLARCEAU, DE BELLOT, and DR. BERNARD *appear at door, C.*

DE VILL. Aha! Here's the fair florist! Come in, come in.

FIFINE. Here are some customers. What can I show you, gentlemen?

DE VILL. Nothing fairer than yourself, sweet Flora.

DE BELL. We are going to the ball. Will you accompany us?

FIFINE. Gentlemen!

Enter EUGENIE, L.

DE VILL. Ah, another! Then each will have his darling, and the doctor must look out for himself!

FIFINE. Such insolence! Leave the house.

DE VILL. Don't be cruel because you're handsome.

EUGENIE. Do not call for help.—(*aside to FIFINE*) You may wake my father.

FIFINE. Go!

DE VILL. Certainly, if you desire it; but as the price of our obedience—one little kiss—

EUGENIE. Gentlemen, such conduct is unworthy——
DE VILL. What! Not a kiss—not one?

SEBASTIAN *appears at door, c.*

SEBAS. (C.) No, gentlemen—not even one!

DE VILL. Bravo! (*chaffing him*) Quite a dramatic effect!
The champion arrives at the exact moment that he's wanted!

SEBAS. (*observing DR. BERNARD—aside*) A man of colour!

DE VILL. And what may your business be, my doughty champion?

SEBAS. I find you offering a rudeness to a woman; and to offer insult to one of your mother's sex, be she a marchioness or a milliner, is the act of a ruffian and a blackguard. You had best repair it by asking pardon of these ladies.

DE VILL. You're a fool!

DR. B. Not so. The gentleman is quite right. Ladies, we acknowledge our indiscretion, and ask your pardon.

DE BELLOT. Pray include me in your forgiveness.

SEBAS. I thank you, gentlemen. (*shaking hands with them*)
Now, sir, it is your turn. (*a pause*) Let me beg of you.

DE VILL. Go to the devil!

SEBAS. (*seizing him by the nape of his neck, and forcing him to bend*) Bow, sir! In my time I have bent stouter twigs than you. (*Music*) Ladies, these gentlemen have a few words to say to me. May I request they may be said in private.

EUGENIE. (*aside*) That strange man! I shudder while I look at him. *Exit EUGENIE and FIFINE, L.*

DE VILL. (*with suppressed rage*) You are my superior, sir, in brute force, but you shall make reparation for your outrage. There is my card. (SEBASTIAN *will not take it*) Do you refuse sir? Do you fear to let me know your name?

SEBAS. Young man, if I desire not to know you, it is for your sake, not for mine. (*to BERNARD*) You are a man of colour, sir.

DR. B. I am, sir, Dr. Bernard.

SEBAS. (*to BELLOT*) Monsieur Eugene de Bellot, I believe. (BELLOT *bows*) I am Lord Falconer of Falconwood.

DE VILL. Then, my lord, you——

DR. B. My dear Auguste, a duel is impossible—you were in the wrong. You would not be able to find a second.

DE BELL. Certainly not!

DE VILL. Oh! very well; as you please.

(BERNARD and EUGENE *bow and exit, c.*)

Lord Falconer of Falconwood, before two women, in the presence of my friends, you have outraged my self-love, and wounded my vanity. Take care! (*with concentrated face*) The reparation of a duel, I am told, is impossible. There may be

in your life as in that of other men, some act that may place you at my mercy; if there is, I will find it out, be sure on't; and when you are assailable, the blow shall fall. Adieu till next we meet.

Exit DE VILLARCEAU, C.

SEBAS. 'Twould have been better had I forgot him. I do not fear great perils, dangers, tempests, but I dread trifles—trifles upset the most gigantic schemes—the most colossal calculations. Palaces are undermined by insects—grains of sand.

Enter EUGENIE, L.

SEBAS. (*with emotion*) Alone with her.

EUGENIE. My lord, let me thank you for your generous protection.

SEBAS. Do not speak of it, 'twas nothing. Oh! could I make some sacrifice worthy of you; some sacrifice that would convince you—

EUGENIE. Of your love for me. Pardon me, my lord, but let me request you not to recall this subject. My friendship is yours, but—

SEBAS. Friendship! I should prefer your heart, that I might some day turn to love. Oh! Eugenie, a passion like mine has in it a fatality that drags everything into its resistless current. I am of a hard and iron nature, incapable of softening but on two subjects. The memory of my father—the desire to recover a lost brother. The only tears I can shed are for them. Eugenie, you shall love me!

EUGENIE. Shall! (*proudly*)

SEBAS. Yes; *shall!* To gain your love, I would not hesitate at crime! I dare all; for when you love me, you will pardon all.

EUGENIE. I love already. My heart is given to another, to a young artist, my affianced husband.

SEBAS. You love him—the worse for him.

EUGENIE. You would kill him?

SEBAS. Kill him! That he might live pale and bleeding in your heart enthroned for ever. No, that were useless. No, I will sap the qualities which you love in him.

EUGENIE. You cannot. You cannot separate an artist from his art. I have seen him when in frightful straits, struck down by poverty, rise up still more exalted and worthy of my love.

SEBAS. Possibly! But you have not seen him dazzled by success or surrounded by flattery. Prosperity is more the touchstone of virtue than adversity. I will change your Lacedæmonian to a Sybarite. I am rich, I can purchase everything.

EUGENIE. Not everything. You cannot purchase love! (*with exaltation*) You cast down the gauntlet—the stake, my lover and my husband. Be it so! You would degrade him, ruin, effeminate him by the power of gold. I will save, will enrich him, will exalt him by the power of love—of love alone!

SEBAS. Beautiful and defiant. You shall be mine! On whatever I fix my mind I must succeed. It is my fate. You will accompany me to-night to the ball at the Opera! (EUGENIE *smiles*) You will—I feel you will. When all the household are asleep, I shall come and find this door open, and you waiting to receive me. (*points to door, R.*)

FITZ. (*heard without*) I know he is here.

SEBAS. My young friend. I appointed to meet him here.

Enter FITZNODDLETON, C.

FITZ. My dear Falconer, here I am. I've flown on the wings of love to see my dear little Fifine. I dote on her—positively dote on her.

SEBAS. Have you seen the notary about the villa I intend to purchase of Monsieur de Beauval?

FITZ. Of course I have. He offered me the choice of a lot of negro servants—all sorts—regular niggers, mulattos, quadroons—but I wouldn't have 'em. I despise niggers. They are not men like us; and I want all your servants to be emphatically men.

SEBAS. (*dropping his glove*) Right—whites! My servants must be all white men—as white as you. Pick up my glove.

Enter FIFINE, L.

FITZ. (*doing so*) I'm going to the ball to-night.

SEBAS. No, you're not. I forbid it. (*goes up*)

FITZ. Ah, charming Fifine! if you knew how I doted on you, how my heart beats for you—feel how it beats. (*placing her hand on his breast*) Hark, it goes pit pat, pit pat. No, it's my watch. (*pulling his watch out*) I've come here to stop a long time.

SEBAS. Augustus, come with me, we must go.

FITZ. Yes, my dear Falconer. My lovely Fif—

DE GRANDET opens door, L.

SEBAS. Come, I am waiting for you.

DE GRAND. That voice!

FITZ. At your service, my noble friend.

SEBAS. Ladies, good night.

Exit SEBASTIAN and FITZNODDLETON, door, L. C.

DE GRAND. (*advancing*) 'Tis he! 'Tis he!

EUGENIE. Who, father?

DE GRAND. (*excitedly*) The quadroon! My steward—my slave! The wretch who robbed me—who killed my wife! I saw him here—here—Sebastian Cabrera.

Enter ISABEL, door, L.

ISABEL. Sebastian Cabrera, here?

EUGENIE. Impossible, dear father! The man who has just left us is Lord Falconer.

DE GRAND. No, no.

ISABEL. He is delirious again!

DE GRAND. No, no—I tell you, I swear I am not mad! I heard his voice. I recognised his features. Great heaven—am I really mad? Is this an illusion?

EUGENIE. (*aside*) If my father should be right. He said he would return, if I left that door open. (*taking ISABEL up stage, and speaking to her*) Isabel, should you know this Sebastian, if you saw him?

ISABEL. Oh, yes; I saw him every day for nearly thirteen years.

EUGENIE. (*to GRANDET, who appears absorbed*) Father, retire to rest again, I beg of you. FINE, to your care I confide him.

Music—DE GRANDET is led off by FINE, L.—Music—piano during the rest of the dialogue.

EUGENIE. Isabel, remain behind that door. The man our father thinks he recognized will be here directly. Look on him closely; be sure 'tis he—Sebastian. Above all, not a word—not a sound.

ISABEL. Oh! how I tremble. (*EUGENIE opens door, R.—Music—forte*) Eugenie.

EUGENIE. Go! (*ISABEL gets behind door L.—Music piano again*) Now, powers of vengeance aid me!

Enter SEBASTIAN, door, R.

SEBAS. Eugenie, I believed my nerves were iron. When I found that door open, I thought I should have fallen.

EUGENIE. (*takes candle, and throws the light on his face—ISABEL watching*) You are very pale. (*SEBASTIAN goes up stage—EUGENIE runs to door, L.*)

ISABEL. 'Tis he. (*Music forte, then very piano*)

EUGENIE. (*shutting door, L.—a pause*) Powers of vengeance inspire me! I will unmask the villain! I will avenge my father! (*SEBASTIAN comes down stage—EUGENIE changes her manner and tone*) My lord, you say you love me.

SEBAS. With the deepest devotion—the most profound respect.

EUGENIE. Swear to me that you love me with respect. Swear it by some oath you dare not break.

SEBAS. I swear that I desire your love—that I aspire to the honour of your hand in marriage. I swear it by the sacred memory of my dead father!

EUGENIE. (*listening for a moment*) All is quiet, all are at rest. (*with a change of manner*) Your lordship is going to the ball at the Opera: will you conduct me?

SEBAS. (*aside*) Am I now approaching the triumph that it was predicted will immediately precede my death?

Music forte—he leads her out, door, R.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*A magnificent furnished Apartment at Sebastian's house; stands of armour; rich skins of animals; sofa, C.; doors, C.; doors, R. and L.; carpet down.*

JEROME discovered.—*Enter FITZNODDLETON, followed by a SERVANT, who carries a picture, which he places on arm-chair, R., and exits.*

FITZ. Ha, Jerome, is that you? How are you?

JEROME. Quite well, my lord, thank you. I haven't seen your lordship for a whole week.

FITZ. Why, you see, Jerome, there has been a reason for that. My noble friend Falconer, said to me, "Don't come back to me till you are the husband of Miss Mary Jane Matchemall." Of course I winced a little, but—

JEROME. She is very handsome, my lord.

FITZ. Handsome—oh yes, she is; but her mother, my mother-in-law, oh, she's got such a mouth. Oh! such a gap—a regular gulf—a yawning abyss, with teeth to it. Well, I heard that Falconer had met with an accident. I was about to rush to him, when I recollected he had forbidden me to appear before him unless married—so I got married to-day. I've been married about two hours and a quarter. (*looking at his watch*) She's got such a mouth—oh! such a mouth! When she laughs it seems as if heaven and earth were being driven asunder. What has been the matter with my noble friend?

JEROME. He burnt his arm in rescuing a child from a house on fire; he is quite recovered now. That mulatto doctor of his is a wonderful man.

Enter SEBASTIAN, C.

SEBAS. Has not Eugenie returned?

JEROME. Not yet, my lord. (*bows and exits*)

FITZ. My noble friend, I'm delighted to see you; and how are you?

SEBAS. Oh, recovered—quite well—and how are you?

FITZ. Me—oh, sir, I'm married—to Miss Mary Jane Matchemall, as you wished.

SEBAS. I congratulate you.

FITZ. What a mouth that is her mother has got—oh! such a mouth! By the way, you remember that picture you took such a fancy to as we were passing in the carriage? I've brought it with me. (SEBASTIAN *rushes to it, and examines it with interest*) It's by quite a young artist—the subject is called "Despair."

SEBAS. (*aside*) Every feature the image of my brother. I must know this painter.

FITZ. I'll find him out for you. By-the-bye, I've got a steward for you—he'll wait on you to-day—and I've seen Monsieur de Beauval.

SEBAS. What does he want? He has sold me his villa. I have deposited the money.

FITZ. Yes; but one corner of the garden contains the remains of some of the members of his family—in fact it is a sort of private cemetery—and he wants to keep that portion of the garden for himself—very natural. Now that very little bit of ground, he has heard, you have turned into a conservatory.

SEBAS. It is already finished. I had it built for the fête I give to-morrow.

FITZ. Just what I said to Beauval. But he replied that there was some mistake as to the limits—the boundaries of the property that you bought.

SEBAS. I will see him myself.

FITZ. Do so, and I can be always with you, and in fact—I will never leave you.

SEBAS. Eugenie comes. Augustus—leave us.

FITZ. Yes, my noble friend. I'll go and find out the name of the artist who pencilled this picture.

Exit FITZNODDLETON, R. door, with picture.

Enter EUGENIE, L. door.

EUGENIE. He is here! Oh! 'tis time that I tear off the mask. 'Tis time that the vengeance I have now to accomplish, should fall and crush my mother's murderer! (*aloud*) Good morning to your lordship. May I ask if your wound—

SEBAS. Oh, better, thank you. Quite well. So much so that I shall be enabled to open the ball with you to-morrow. (*they sit on sofa*) Oh! Eugenie, if you could but give me back some little portion of the vast illimitable love I feel for you.

EUGENIE. (*aside*) There are moments that I think that had not my heart been given to Oscar, I should have loved this man. Away, unworthy weakness! (*aloud*) 'Tis perhaps your fault that I do not love you.

SEBAS. Not so. You love another! (*aside*) Oh, did I but know him!

EUGENIE. (*aside*) Let me think of my father. Let the recollection of his madness and my mother's death spur me to my revenge! (*aloud*) There is a strange feeling. I know not what—that seems to be a barrier, twixt you and me. I think I could have loved you better had you not possessed your noble name, your high rank. I could have loved you better poor and persevering. I am very foolish.

SEBAS. No. You surprise me! You charm me!

EUGENIE. I feel a thirst for something strange, violent, romantic! My ideal, is a bold adventurer, with whom I could gladly share all perils—dangers—even crimes!

SEBAS. (*watching her attentively*) Crimes! (*aside*) what does this mean?

EUGENIE. I would alter this monotonous existence. I would leave Paris. Leave France. Do you, like me, love the sea? Let us freight a vessel, and with a brave and hardy crew, seek for impossible adventures. Take on ourselves some romantic fantastic mission, some fanciful Utopian scheme.

SEBAS. (*aside*) There is some hidden meaning in her words and manner.

EUGENIE. For example: Let us strike the manacles from hands that seem that they were born to fetters! Let us give freedom to the slave! (*SEBASTIAN starts*) Let us avenge the martyred negro! They are our own brethren! Let us aid them! Let us set them free! Let us visit their tyrants' coast! Let us go east, west, to Guadaloupe!

SEBAS. (*rising suddenly, aside*) A snare—a snare!—and spread for me by her! From what hand does the blow fall? What invisible power makes her the instrument of its vengeance? (*looking at her fixedly*) Eugenie, to-morrow I give a fête—the next day I will quit France.

EUGENIE. Quit France?

SEBAS. For ever. To all the romance that you desire I will give reality. We will quit France together.

EUGENIE. (*frightened*) Together!

SEBAS. Each morn shall light us to some terrible adventure—each night close o'er us and some danger past. We

will brave every peril together—do you hear, together. You shall never leave me more. (*going, door L.*)

EUGENIE. My lord!

SEBAS. Never—never! (*aside*) I have you now! Forewarned forearmed! Oh, Dalilah, I shall beware of you! Ere my locks were shorn you have shown your scissors.

Exit SEBASTIAN, *door L.*

EUGENIE. Quit France together! No. To-morrow, during the fête, I will fly—fly! Oh, my father! my mission has failed. I cannot aid thee!

Enter OSCAR, C.

OSCAR. Eugenie!

EUGENIE. Oscar here!

OSCAR. Yes, I know all—your mission here—everything! Fifine has told me all. You would learn whether this Lord Falconer is Lord Falconer, or the escaped quadroon, Sebastian Cabrera. I will discover for you.

EUGENIE. You! How?

OSCAR. He is in search of a lost child—a brother—so you told Fifine. He has a medal—a counterpart of one the child should have.

EUGENIE. True, he seeks for a lost brother.

OSCAR. Well—that brother is here.

EUGENIE. You!

OSCAR. Yes—I will assume the character of that brother. You know I am a foundling. If he believe me, I shall penetrate every secret of his life, and then—

EUGENIE. Oh, Oscar! (*embracing him*) But 'tis madness!

OSCAR. Not so. My mind is made up. I will answer yes to everything he asks. If he perplexes me, 'tis my memory that fails—you understand.

Enter JEROME, *door L.*

JEROME. His lordship will be with you instantly.

Exit JEROME, L.

OSCAR. I have written to him, and await his answer here. He comes! *Au revoir*, Eugenie! Wish me success; and the murderer of your mother shall be unmasked by your husband.

EUGENIE *embraces* OSCAR and *exit, door C.*

Enter SEBASTIAN at the same time, L.

SEBAS. (*looking fixedly at OSCAR*) Oh, how like! how very—very like! 'Tis but a brother's heart that could be certain. (*calming himself*) Be seated, sir. (*they sit*) The object of an interview is so extraordinary that we must try to preserve our calmness that we may gain our end. If at the conclusion of

this strange meeting we are not brothers—let us at least be friends.

OSCAR. Certainly.

SEBAS. His hair and eyes are those of a quadroon. Ah! if it should be—(*aloud*) in token of good feeling, sir, your hand.

OSCAR. (*refusing, then accepting—aside*) To grasp his hand with hatred at my heart—no matter. Let me play my part out.

SEBAS. Let us speak first of your infancy. How old are you?

OSCAR. I hardly know. I was so ill-treated in my childhood.

SEBAS. Where were you ill-treated?

OSCAR. With a company of mountebanks who travelled in France.

SEBAS. And the chief of the troop—

OSCAR. Was my father—that is—he whom I called my father.

SEBAS. What has become of him?

OSCAR. He died by the road-side a few miles from Paris.

SEBAS. This mountebank was not your father. Had you been stolen from any one, or were you a foundling?

OSCAR. I—I know not.

SEBAS. You should have around your neck a medal.

OSCAR. (*quickly*) I have not got it now. I gave it away.

SEBAS. That is not true. Such things as those no one gives away—you blush, you know you are not speaking truth. It was a silver medal, and the mountebanks would have stolen it from you to sell it.

OSCAR. (*who begins really to remember facts, and hardly can separate the realities he feels he remembers, and the lies that he assumes*) Possibly—but it seems to me that I had such a medal, and that I slept with my finger twined in the ribbon.

SEBAS. They were some letters engraved on it.

OSCAR. Yes—and the words—(*trying to remember*) I cannot think of them.

SEBAS. (*watching him*) Do you think you have ever seen any other country than this.

OSCAR. I—I—I think that I remember—as if in a dream—that when I was very little I saw many faces about me—black faced negroes—(*aside*) that is true. I do not seem to myself to tell a lie.

SEBAS. Do you remember an immense blue expanse? The sea? Of living on board ship?

OSCAR. When first I saw a ship at Havre it seemed to me to recal something—something—

SEBAS. Have you any recollection of the face of an old man?

OSCAR. (*quickly*) With white hair?

SEBAS. A scar upon his forehead?

OSCAR. Yes.

SEBAS. Here? (*placing his finger on OSCAR's forehead*)

OSCAR. Yes.

SEBAS. (*kissing the place he touched—then aside*) Oh, my father, 'tis thy image my lips have pressed!

OSCAR. (*bewildered*) That kiss!—oh, my mind wanders—it can no longer distinguish fiction from reality. But, Eugenie! I must be cautious. (*aloud*) Your lordship seems much moved.

SEBAS. And you—do you feel no secret instinct—no natural attraction to—do you not feel you are my—

OSCAR. You are Lord Falconer, are you not?

SEBAS. (*astounded*) Falconer. (*aside*) Why that name? Let me not hope too much. I know—I feel it's he—my brother! When I kissed his forehead, I felt 'twas he! (*aloud*) If I show you the counterpart of the medal you once possessed, could you recognize it?

OSCAR. Yes.

SEBAS. If—if I call you by the name you bore in infancy, should you recollect it?

OSCAR. Certainly I should. I know it now; but what of that, if your name is Lord Falconer?

SEBAS. (*aside*) Again!

OSCAR. Your name is Lord Falconer of Falconwood. My name, and that of my brother, is Cabrera.

SEBAS. (*aside*) A snare—a trap, and set for me by him. And the poor boy knows not that the man he could deliver up to justice is his brother. And those who sent him know it not.

OSCAR. Your lordship—

SEBAS. (*coldly*) Young man, as you say, Lord Falconer and I have no connection with the name of Cabrera, and though there are some coincidences that supported the supposition, you are not my brother.

OSCAR. (*changing his manner*) You are right—you are not Sebastian Cabrera—you are Lord Falconer, and you have dared to love my affianced wife.

SEBAS. (*astounded*) Ah! Then 'tis you that she loves! (*about to seize OSCAR, who avoids him, proudly stops, and looks at him*) My mother's eyes, my mother's look. He is my brother!

OSCAR. Here are arms, (*pointing to stand*) let us fight.

SEBAS. Fight! with you? No—I refuse.

OSCAR. And wherefore? Why?

SEBAS. (*giving way to his feelings*) Because you are my—

(*stopping himself—aside*) Who can have sent him? What arm guides the blow? Who has discovered me?

OSCAR. My lord, I am unwilling to believe you are a coward.

SEBAS. Poor boy! (*sitting on sofa*)

OSCAR. (*contemptuously*) An abject coward!

SEBAS. (*aside*) Ah, my brother.

OSCAR. But perhaps you are not Lord Falconer, but this Cabrera, whom I will unmask and drag to justice. Do you hear, coward? (*strikes SEBASTIAN over the face with his glove*)

SEBAS. (*after a pause*) The recollection of the outrage you have offered me will be to you a bitter punishment.

OSCAR. (*aside*) To let me strike him and not fight. His eyes so full of tenderness. Great heaven, if he should be—
(*aloud*) But now you spoke of a medal you could show me.

SEBAS. (*coldly*) The medal. I have no medal.

OSCAR. You lied, then.

SEBAS. (*mildly*) Lied.

Enter JEROME, door, C.

JEROME. The steward recommended by Lord Augustus to wait upon your lordship.

SEBAS. Admit him! (*JEROME exits, C., to OSCAR*) Pray leave me. I will see you again—by this door. *Exit OSCAR, door R.*

Enter DE GRANDET, door C., not now in rags, but dressed with an appearance of poverty—he comes down stage—SEBASTIAN looks after OSCAR, and does not see DE GRANDET.

DE GRAND. (*his eyes bent on the ground so that he does not see SEBASTIAN'S face*) My lord, I have been a merchant, and have met with great misfortunes. I am used to business, write a good hand, and am clever at accounts.

SEBAS. (*who trembled at the sound of DE GRANDET'S voice*) Monsieur De Grandet, my—I was about to say my master—and he comes here to beg me to be his. Oh, time, what wond'rous changes dost thou make!

DE GRAND. I have been accustomed to the management of property, and—(*recognising SEBASTIAN*) Ah! 'tis he—I'll swear it. (*SEBASTIAN is about to lock door, R.—DE GRANDET rushes to him and seizes his arm*)

DE GRAND. Why lock the door, Sebastian Cabrera?

SEBAS. That we may speak without interruption, Henri De Grandet.

DE GRAND. Villain, 'tis you!

SEBAS. It is, Sebastian Cabrera, once your steward, your overseer. You wronged me—I am avenged. Your fortune, doubled by my prudence, is in my hands.

DE GRAND. Wretch; when I leave this house, expect the worst!

SEBAS. (*laughing*) When you leave this house.

DE GRAND. Robber and murderer, who caused the death of my poor wife, the ruin of my name, and destroyed the prospects of my child. Dare you brave the anger of your victim, the majesty of law?

SEBAS. Calm yourself and listen. I had a little brother on whom I doted. I had a wife, who gave me hopes that she might one day bless me with a child. One summer's day, my wife, my little brother, and myself, were at work in your plantation—working for you—when you passed with Mademoiselle De Grandet by your side, and a friend—a visitor who had just arrived. My wife was handsome.—Your friend remarked it. You answered him gaily, "Well, as she seems to suit your taste, take her—I give her to you."

DE GRAND. Ruffian! you threw your arms round my wife's neck with the fury of a lion!

SEBAS. I did, and pressed my slave's lips to her patrician mouth, and shouted to you—"Can you now feel what a man feels who sees violence offered to the wife of his bosom—the mother of his child?" You ordered me to be branded on the arm with a red-hot iron. Your wife had my wife whipped so cruelly that in three days she died, bearing with her to the grave the fruits of our unhappy union. On the day of her death, you sold under my eyes my poor old father and my little brother. They were embarked for France. You were not then a father; your little girl was not then born. You knew not what it was to love a child; but you had a father—and you sold mine beneath my very eyes. The ship sailed—I never saw him more.

DE GRAND. Enough of this!

SEBAS. I then stood in this world alone!—alone I worked on! I worked well, did I not? You were pleased with me. I still toiled on, until you made me your overseer. All appeared forgotten—pardoned. When you spoke to me you called me "friend." Monsieur de Grandet, there are abysses so profound, that cast a stone down them, you cannot hear the sound it makes when it has reached the extremest depth below. My soul was such an abyss. You heard no sound or wail of grief; the stone you cast had reached the bottom of the gulf. (*with fury*) Now hear its echo in the ruin of your fortune!—the dying wail of your expiring wife!—the blasted prospects of your child!—your own last cry for mercy and for life!

DE GRAND. For my life! Villain! would you kill me?

SEBAS. Yes; unless you swear by your love for your child

that you will take no part against me. Swear this, and I will return your fortune—nay more, will pardon you.

DE GRAND. You would kill me! (*astonished*)

SEBAS. (*taking poniard from stand of arms*) Why not? Think you, after what I have done, that I should shrink at that. What matters to me—one crime the more, since it must be the last—and you are here, given by vengeance to my hands.

DE GRAND. I am an old man, weak, feeble, grey-haired, not always possessing control over my reason—but I am your master—once a slave you are my slave for ever. I have wounded the dignity of your manhood in your love to your father, brother, wife—but it was my right to do so! (*snatching the poniard from him*) On your knees, dog! What care I for your love, or for your dignity? Are you of my race? No! thy colour is not mine—thy blood not mine. I was born thy master! Thou shalt die my slave!

SEBAS. Your mind is wandering—take care.

DE GRAND. (*growing more furious*) On your knees, slave, or I'll kill you like a dog.

SEBAS. (*retiring, and laughing at him*) Take care.

DE GRAND. On your knees!

(*he pursues SEBASTIAN till he reaches door, L., as he is about to strike him with the poniard EUGENIE enters and receives the blow—picture—Music piano, till end of Act*)

SEBAS. } (*together*) { Eugenie!

DE GRAND. } { My child!

SEBAS. Wounded! and by him, and he is her father.

DE GRAND. Villain! Leave me this child at least! Sebastian, thou hast killed her! (*SEBASTIAN bears EUGENIE to sofa, C.*)

Enter OSCAR, door R., and hears the last words.

OSCAR. Sebastian! Then 'tis he. Assassin! Murderer! I will give thee up to justice.

Going off, C., SEBASTIAN stops him, and shows him a medal.

SEBAS. Hold! this medal—lost—do you not recognise it—Eugene Cabrera?

OSCAR. That name!

SEBAS. Would you deliver up your brother!

OSCAR. My brother! Great heaven.

EUGENIE. Oscar!

SEBAS. Go to her. Save her for your own sake, then yield me up to justice if you dare! (*Music—forte—picture*).

SCENE SECOND.—*Apartment in Sebastian's Villa, at Neuilly*
(1st grooves).

Enter FITZNODDDLETON, L.

FITZ. Well, everything is ready, and the fête will soon begin. How jolly, if I were not married, not that I so much care about being married. No, I don't dislike my wife, oh no; but my mother-in-law—oh! (*making a wry face*) When I look at her mouth—oh, caves and catacombs! It frightens me.

Enter DR. BERNARD, L.

Ah, Doctor! How is Mademoiselle Eugénie?

DR. B. Oh, better. There is no danger.

FITZ. What was the cause of—

DR. B. His lordship and a friend were fencing, and unluckily one of the foils had no button. Mademoiselle sportively threw herself between them, his lordship's adversary happened to lunge at the same time, fortunately, the foil only raised the skin, and though the wound is painful it is not dangerous.

FITZ. Now, if my old mother-in-law had only been in the way, and opened her mouth sportively, his lordship's adversary might have jumped down her throat, sword in hand, but even then I don't believe it would have strangled her. It is such a mouth!

Enter MRS. MATCHEMALL, running on, R.

Ugh, here it is!

MRS. M. Dearest Augustus, the fête is going to begin—come with me. (*taking him off, R.*)

Enter MARY JANE, running on, L.

MARY J. Darling love, the fête is about commencing, take me to it. (*pulling him, L.*)

FITZ. Gently, gently. Doctor, what is the meaning of all the servants being in costume?

DR. B. The fête is the fête of all nations. A Spanish servant will present you with sherry; a Cypriot with wine of Cyprus; a Russian with ices; an Algerine with coffee; and an Englishman—

FITZ. With roast beef and plum pudding I suppose?

DR. B. Perhaps so; but my duties call me home. Ladies, au revoir! *Exit, L.*

MRS. M. Come, son-in-law.

MARY J. Come, darling husband! (*both pulling him*)

FITZ. Don't, don't, you're making a sandwich of me.

Enter FIFINE in a ball dress, L.

FIFINE. Ah, my lord, here you are.

FITZ. Oh, lord, here's the little flower-maker.

MRS. M. (*in an awful voice*) Son-in-law, who is that young woman?

MARY J. Lord Fitznoddleton, who is that person?

FITZ. Eh? oh! I—I—I——

FIFINE. I am Fifine Fadette, artificial florist, in the Passage de l'Opera, and that gentleman professed love for me three days ago, and wanted to marry me.

MRS. M. Oh, the wretch!

MARY J. Oh! the monster! when he was engaged to me.

FITZ. Ladies, only hear me.

MRS. M. } Wretch, villain, heathen, &c., &c.

MARY J. }

They pull him off, L, FIFINE laughing.

FIFINE. Serves him right, for daring to run after me when he was engaged to that English lady. Oh, dear me! Everybody seems to get married but me! Oh, Henry Malcome! You are the only man who ever touched my heart; and though I can never see you again, though the fatal glaciers of Grindewald destroyed my hope, I know, I feel I never can forget you.

Song introduced and exit, L.

SCENE THIRD.—*A magnificent Conservatory; tropical trees exotics, &c.; a wall covered with a trellis, L.*

SEBASTIAN *discovered seated, his coat off, shirt sleeve turned up;*

DR. BERNARD *close by him with a brazier of charcoal, and a small red-hot iron.*

SEBAS. The mark of the brand then is quite erased—you have burnt it out? (DR. BERNARD *assents*) Good. Though still a slave, as Grandet said, I am no more a branded one. As I saved a child from a burning house a week ago, the scar will be accounted for. Eugenie——

DR. B. Is better, and shortly will be quite well.

SEBAS. Thank heaven! (*calling*) Jerome! (JEROME *enters*) Open all the doors. Let the fête begin. Come, doctor, bring your friendly iron with you. (*aside*) Now—now I am invincible.

Exeunt, carrying brazier, &c., R.

JEROME *opens doors—Music—enter a procession of SERVANTS male and female, dressed in every variety of national costume; after them LADIES and GENTLEMEN in full evening dress—FITZNODDLETON, FIFINE, MARY JANE, and MRS. MATCH-EMALL always with FITZNODDLETON—SERVANTS hand about refreshments—whatever FITZNODDLETON takes his mother-in-law and wife take from him—Grand Ballet of All Nations.*

Enter SEBASTIAN, *in evening dress, followed by* DR. BERNARD, R.

SEBAS. (*bowing*) Ladies, gentlemen, your presence honours me. (*OSCAR comes down stage*) Oscar! (*he holds out his hand—OSCAR hesitates to take it*) Do you refuse my hand? Wherefore? Are you not of my race, son of my dead father?

OSCAR. Sebastian, Monsieur de Grandet has told me all the events of your past life.

SEBAS. And do you too condemn me?

OSCAR. No; I pity and feel for you. But, why remain here to court danger? Why not fly?

SEBAS. Fly! I cannot quit the battle field in the hour of victory! I can brave all! I am fearless and invincible.

JEROME. (*announcing*) Monsieur de Beauval—Monsieur Auguste de Villarceau. (*they enter, SEBASTIAN welcomes BEAUVAL*)

DE VILL. Has your lordship forgotten me? Do you not remember one night during the Carnival, you offered me an insult?

SEBAS. (*aside*) The grain of sand! (*aloud*) I remember all, sir.

JEROME. (*announcing*) Monsieur Henry Malcome!

SEBAS. (*shuddering*) Who?

DE VILL. (*repeating with emphasis*) Monsieur Henry Malcome! (*LORD FALCONER enters C. advances gaily to SEBASTIAN*)

LORD F. I hope I see your lordship quite well?

SEBAS. (*conquering his feelings*) Quite well thank you. May I ask you how you—

LORD F. Oh! never better; quite fresh. In fact I am now in a high state of preservation.

MARY J. Then you are not dead?

LORD F. I believe not.

FITZ. But are you sure? Are you sure you're not?

MRS. M. Son-in-law!

FITZ. Yes, mamma in ditto.

MRS. M. Hold your tongue!

FITZ. I shan't! But are you sure it's you?

LORD F. I have every reason to believe it is.

FITZ. But tell us how—

LORD F. Oh! too long a story; suffice it I owe my escape to a young man, a stranger whom I would give half my fortune to meet. I was placed in a hospital where I had a fever, delirium, and all the usual symptoms of having been thawed back to life again; but I have recovered, and like a bottle of good champagne, I'm all the better for having been put into ice.

ALL. Extraordinary! Wonderful! What an escape! (*DE VILLARCEAU and DE BELLOT observe SEBASTIAN narrowly*)

FITZ. It reminds me of an occurrence that happened to me once. One evening last November, I was walking down Oxford Street towards Regent's Circus—(*all go up stage*,

SEBAS. (*pretending not to understand*) Your name?

LORD F. Come, come, no fooling; my name, you understand.

SEBAS. Hardly, sir. I believe I have the honour of addressing Monsieur Henry Malcome.

LORD F. Yes, that is—no—hang it! Without more joking give me back my name.

SEBAS. I would with pleasure, but I have only my own, and that I must keep for myself.

LORD F. Eh, what? Why?

SEBAS. On the same principle that I retain my title, my honour, my signature.

LORD F. Signature! Pardon me, but may I be allowed to see your signature?

SEBAS. Certainly. (*showing him pocket book*)

LORD F. Why that's mine!

SEBAS. You are in error. See. (*writes a few letters*) You see it's mine—Falconer!

LORD F. (*looking at the writing and at him*) Ah, I see, you're too much for me!

SEBAS. That is exactly my opinion. (*goes up*)

FIFINE. (*coming down*) So you're not dead?

LORD F. Why, no, on the contrary, I seem to be more alive than ever—I may say that, now there are two of me. FIFINE, do you remember that night, the masquerade at the opera?

FIFINE. And I suppose you're come back to marry me?

LORD F. Marry you? Phew! (*aside*) Madame Henry Malcome. She's not ambitious. (*looking off, L.*) Eh, what? Is it possible?

FIFINE. What?

LORD F. The young man who preserved my life at Grinde-wald. I must speak to him.

FIFINE. I'll go with you. I'll never leave you again.

LORD F. You never shall. Come along. (*Runs off with her, L.*)

SEBAS. Struck down by me, saved by my brother. Who can refuse belief in an inevitable destiny?

DE VILL. (*advancing*) And now, Monsieur——

SEBAS. Pardon me—my lord.

Enter OSCAR, L.

DE VILL. Let me inform your lordship then, that I have taken the liberty of bringing with me some uninvited guests. (*pointing to some men dressed in black*) It will be useless to present them formally. They are magistrates.

OSCAR. Great heaven!

SEBAS. Indeed. Monsieur de Beauval, yesterday you called

to explain the error in the boundary limits of our respective property. This is the very spot in dispute, see, there is the wall.

DE BEAU. This corner of my park is certainly consecrated ground. On the other side of that wall lie my parents. On this—but we will speak of that hereafter. Pardon my interruption Monsieur de Villarceau.

SEBAS. Pray go on, sir.

DE VILL. I came here to prove that you are a liar and a swindler. *(general movement)*

SEBAS. Ladies, gentlemen, pray do not leave me. This is becoming interesting. Pray, sir, may I ask if you have any proofs?

DE VILL. Proofs! Look at them!

EUGENIE and ISABEL lead on DE GRANDET, L.

OSCAR. You here, Eugenie, who can scarce sustain yourself!

EUGENIE. Yes, Oscar, I can—for I support my father.

DE VILL. Monsieur de Grandet, do you know this gentleman? *(pointing to SEBASTIAN)* Speak, sir! and remember 'tis the law that listens. *(a dead silence—DE GRANDET and SEBASTIAN advance, C.)*

SEBAS. *(in a low voice to DE GRANDET)* Tell all, Monsieur De Grandet—tell all.

DE GRAND. I will—I will.

SEBAS. How you degraded and belied my wife.

DE GRAND. *(terrified)* I dreamed of her last night.

SEBAS. How you sold my father and his child.

DE GRAND. They—they too visited me in my sleep.

SEBAS. How you laughed when you heard the red-hot iron hiss, and eat into my flesh.

DE GRAND. I hear it still.

SEBAS. *(in a low voice)* Tell all you know, Monsieur De Grandet.

DE VILL. Speak!

DE GRAND. Oh! that poor woman!—the old man!—the child!—the burning, crackling flesh!—I see it all now. *(aloud)* I—I—I do not know this man. *(returns to his daughters)*

ISABEL. My father!

EUGENIE. *(stepping forward)* Let me speak!

SEBAS. *(whispering)* Tell them how you nursed and cultured in my heart all that it contained of purity and good to lead me to my death—by love affected to betray me—a treason and a lie! *(aloud)* Tell all!

EUGENIE. My father! *returns to DE GRANDET)*

Enter LORD FALCONER, L.—he takes a glass of maraschino from a GIRL dressed as a Greek.

LORD F. You are too much for them, I see. (*to DE VILLARCEAU*) I am glad I have met you here, for I think you can decide a little dispute between his lordship and myself. (*to SEBASTIAN*) Now, my lord, I shall be enchanted if you'll tell me who I am.

DE VILL. I will tell you—

OSCAR. (*advancing*) One moment. (*taking LORD FALCONER aside*) To-morrow, my lord, your rights shall be acknowledged; but, for heaven's sake, silence to-day. Remember, I saved your life. That man is my brother.

LORD F. (*after looking at OSCAR a moment, turning to DE VILLARCEAU*) My good sir, I wish you would not meddle with what don't concern you. To hear you go on, one would imagine that that was not Lord Falconer, and that I was. Do hold your tongue, and don't make a fool of yourself.

DE VILL. But I insist—

LORD F. Oh, rubbish! Take a glass of wine. The best maraschino I have tasted since I left France.

The MAGISTRATES confer among themselves and exeunt.

SEBAS. I triumph.

OSCAR. My brother!

SEBAS. We must part this very night. (*to others*) Ladies—gentlemen, before the ball commences let me announce to you my departure.

LORD F. Departure!

SEBAS. Yes—on a long voyage I had not thought I should have had to make so soon. (*aside to him*) Monsieur Henry Malcome, accept this, and when you look at it think of me.

LORD F. My pocket-book.

SEBAS. I only keep this—(*taking pearl from pocket book, then giving book to LORD FALCONER*) the pearl. Come hither, little Cypriot.

GIRL. (*approaching with wine*) Some Cyprus wine, my lord!

LORD F. I understand you. Your brother, my preserver, shall be my especial care; he shall bear the name of Falconer and shall marry Eugenie De Grandet.

SEBAS. You promise. Thanks! (*he lets the pearl fall into the wine*) Oscar, Bernard, friends, I drink my parting cup to you. (*he drinks*) The prediction is fulfilled! I die in the hour of my greatest triumph—but I die Lord Falconer. I die in the midst of luxury and power. (*to a LADY*) Madame—

(*a quadrille is played SEBASTIAN and others form a set—as they are about to begin DE BEAUVAL rushes on*)

DE BEAU. Hold, gentlemen, you are dancing on the dead.

SEBAS. (*stopping*) What, sir?

DE BEAU. The faithful old slave—the man of colour, of whom you spoke to me when we first met at Grindewald—old Cabrera——

SEBAS. (*aside*) My father!

DE BEAU. Lies *there*—where you stand—beneath your feet. (*a pause—aside to SEBASTIAN*) And now, before I leave you, let me ask if you really are Lord Falconer?

SEBAS. (*offended*) Monsieur De Beauval!

DE BEAU. Monsieur De Grandet, tell me, is not this Sebastian Cabrera, the man who, by your orders was whipped and branded on the arm? Doubtless your lordship dare not show your arm.

SEBAS. (*whose eyes return to his father's grave despite himself—his knees bending*) Whipped!—branded!—dare not show my arm! (*throwing off his coat and baring his arm*) I am proud of the scars I have received. Five days ago I rescued a child from the flames; you see where the fire caught. (*his eyes returning and his knees bending towards the grave*)

DE BEAU. (*to DE GRANDET*) Then he is not Sebastian Cabrera—he is not your slave?

SEBAS. I am no slave! I am not Sebastian Cabrera—I am not—(*with a burst of passion he yields to the fascination and attraction of the grave, and falls on his knees upon it*) Pardon—pardon—spirit of my father!—pardon, thou injured martyr, that thy son denies thee on thy tomb! Oh! rise—rise, my father from thy grave, and look upon, but not to curse me! (*falls prostrate—OSCAR, EUGENIE, DE GRANDET, ISABEL, and LORD FALCONER recover him—when he is again conscious he gives to DE BEAUVAL a pocket-book*) That will return to Monsieur De Grandet the portion which I robbed him of. Oh! my brother!

OSCAR. Sebastian.

SEBAS. Eugenie. Monsieur De Grandet, I pardon you, can you forgive me?

DE GRAND. I do—I do.

SEBAS. The poison does its appointed work. Oh! forgive me, father—blessed shade—I see thy beckoning hand—I hear thy words, "Seek with me for freedom in eternity." Sweet words! I come. I join thee in the land where all are equal—where the slave is free. (*dies—picture—Music*)

Curtain.



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The half caste

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